Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

9-5-2024

General Education Subcommittee Agenda September 5, 2024

Utah State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/fs_edpol

UtahState University
MERRILL-CAZIER LIBRARY

September 5, 2024
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Champ Hall Conference Room
Zoom (Statewide)

AGENDA

Call to Order – Matt Sanders

Welcome and Introductions – Matt Sanders

Approval of Minutes – No April meeting.

Course Approvals/Removals/Syllabi Approvals
N/A

New Business
Revised CL/CI Proposal Guidelines

General Education Accreditation – Jeff Aird

USHE "What is an Educated Person?" Gen Ed Conference

R470 Updates and Related Tasks for USU

Additional Items

Next meeting on October 3,2024

Adjourn: 9:30 am

Dear Proposers:

Courses awarded a Communications Intensive/Communications Literacy (CI/CL) designation emphasize and actively teach written and oral communication. The Communication Subcommittee is charged with reviewing proposals and upholding the University's high teaching standards. We also want you to be able to submit a successful proposal. Therefore, please read the following before submitting your proposal:

- Please review the **CI, CL2, and CL1 Rubrics** and consider how the content will be taught in your course. Note that both the main Criteria (leftmost column) and the relevant Milestone language (language in middle columns) describe how students will successfully meet the outcomes. The successful proposal will include evidence that the course intentionally provides students with opportunities and guidance necessary to meet all of the criteria.

- Include a **proposal memo** (1-2 pages max., as an additional attachment in Curriculog) that explains how each learning outcome is being met in your course projects and assignments. This document is extremely important. While the committee intentionally represents a wide range of disciplines, we cannot be familiar with the nuances and needs of each discipline or course. Therefore, in your proposal memo, please clarify how the course explicitly teaches (as opposed to simply assigns) written and oral communication at the appropriate CI, CL2, or CL1 level. CI proposers should also briefly contextualize their discipline's goals or approaches to written and oral communication. For all proposals, the committee needs to know how your course will satisfy the following outcomes:

  - Criterion #1: "Develop an ability to write with purpose in consideration of various audiences and in accordance with genre and disciplinary conventions."
  - Criterion #2: "Develop oral communication with purpose and consideration of various audiences in accordance with genre and disciplinary conventions."
  - Criterion #3: "Engage in the iterative process of improving communication based on feedback from an informed audience."
  - Criterion #4: "Develop an ability to intentionally craft language for one's purposes."
  - Criterion #5 (*CL proposals only*): "Engage with credible and relevant texts and sources appropriate to the audience and purpose."

  Note on generative AI in CI/CL courses for proposal memo:
  In keeping with USU policy, we emphasize that instructors in CI/CL courses may design their courses to work with generative AI in a number of meaningful ways. That said, in order to receive a CI/CL designation, courses must be able to provide students with sufficient practice in written and oral communication so that students can demonstrate all of the CI/CL learning outcomes. If your course utilizes generative AI to teach written and/or oral communication, please describe in the memo 1) how students will be working with AI,

Commented [BB1]: The proposed changes are below in yellow.

and 2) how their engagement with AI will support their learning of the CI/CL learning outcomes. Courses that do not provide students with sufficient practice in engaging with the CL/CI criteria (regardless of whether or not generative AI is part of the course) are not eligible to receive CI/CL designations.

- Include an **attached syllabus** that fully reflects and/or expands on the description you provide in the memo. Ensure that all the relevant assignments are reflected in the syllabus and included in the grade breakdown. Because we need a strong sense of how the course is meeting the criteria, please note that simply listing assignment titles in the syllabus is not enough, unless you also include attachments describing the assignments.

- In either the syllabus or as attached documents, **please provide the following information about each assignment** designed to meet CI or CL requirements:

  o *Purpose and type of work expected in the assignments*. Please note that there are a variety of communication assignments and activities that can effectively accomplish the CI/CL outcomes. For example, oral communication assignments do not need to simply be traditional presentations. However, assignments should be structured or intentional in a way that allows for specific feedback and skill development. Therefore, the committee does *not* consider general class discussion, with or without a participation grade, to meet the oral communication criteria.

  o *Length of the assignments*. Because this is a communication *intensive* (for CI) or communication *literacy* (for CL) course, we need a sense that students are engaging in writing and speaking in significant ways. Our expectations for written and oral communication are described below. Disciplines or courses that warrant alternative word counts or time spent presenting for equivalent work should provide a rationale in the proposal memo.
    o *Written assignments.* The course design should clearly allow students with enough practice to meet the CI/CL outcomes. For a CI course, this typically involves each student composing at least 4000 words of writing over a semester; for a CL1/CL2 course, this typically involves each student composing at least 6000 words of writing over a semester. CL courses merit more writing as they have the additional learning outcome of "engag[ing] with credible and relevant texts and sources," which requires additional student practice with summary, paraphrase, quotation, evaluation, synthesis, and citation of sources. However, assignments in CL courses need not necessarily be "longer"; concise writing, which often requires multiple drafts and/or additional projects to document research, is a valid form of writing for all CL courses. Therefore, process work (e.g., in-class writing, drafts of projects, self-assessments, summaries of sources, etc.), whether graded or ungraded, may be included in the word count for CL courses; if process work is part of the word count for your CL course, please include the process writing assignment descriptions in the syllabus and/or proposal memo.

o *Oral assignments.* For all CL1, CL2, and CI courses, each student should orally present for at least seven minutes total over the semester. Oral communication assignments should be designed so that students can receive some type of feedback from an informed audience. In order to meet the General Education assessment expectations, student should present at least twice during the semester.

Notes on generative AI and word count expectations:
o Writing has always been a collaborative endeavor, and no writer can ever claim that their work is completely original. Therefore, we are not establishing a requirement on the amount of non-AI generated text a student must compose in a CI/CL course, as instructors will likely have students utilize generative AI, as well as other writing tools and collaborative processes, in innovative ways. However, we emphasize the importance of students *learning* the CI/CL outcomes—and courses that simply use AI or similar technologies to allow students to generate a designated word count without meaningful engagement in the composing process will likely not be approved as a CI/CL course.

o Given the advent of generative AI, we recommend that proposers use the expectations of 4000 (CI) or 6000 (CL1/CL2) words of writing and seven minutes of oral communication as guidelines in determining whether or not their course engages meaningfully with written and oral communication in ways that warrant a CI/CL designation. Again, if your course utilizes generative AI to teach written and oral communication, please describe the role that AI will play in the course and how students will meet the CI/CL outcomes in your proposal memo.

o *How the assignments will be evaluated/assessed and feedback to the student provided.* Please specify how the students will receive feedback from either the instructor or other informed audience, such as their class peers. When applicable, please include the assessment rubrics used. The rubric language does *not* need to be identical to the CI/CL rubric language. In fact, it is often more appropriate for rubrics to be specific to your course. However, the committee should be able to ascertain how the language in your rubrics aligns with the CI/CL outcomes. Since CI/CL courses are required to include an iterative composing process, it is important to be clear how this is accomplished (i.e., either through required revisions or multiple similar assignments that allow for skill development). We do not have a predetermined number of revisions or drafts in mind, but the course should be clearly targeting improvement as a goal. Please note that the Gen Ed assessment requires that instructors assess each CI/CL outcome *twice*, once early in the semester and once late in the semester.

• In your submission, please do not include hyperlinks to assignments or other necessary materials, unless those hyperlinks can be accessed by the committee (specifically, please don't include hyperlinks for materials on your Canvas course, as we cannot access that material).

Notes for CL1 & CL2 Proposals:

- It is important that CL1 & CL2 courses both meet the criteria for that particular course *and* prepare students for the next course in the sequence (CL2 & CI, respectively). In your proposal memo, please include an explanation of how the course prepares students for a subsequent CL2 or CI course.

- Please note that CL1 & CL2 courses "should not be major-specific or tied to disciplinary-specific modes of communication." Instead, CL courses must "focus on foundational communication skills that are portable across disciplines and audiences as well as foundational information literacy skills." This expectation is listed on the overview page of the approved CL1 & CL2 rubrics. Courses that do not meet this requirement will not be approved.

- Course Titles and Descriptions: While proposers have the freedom to design their own course titles and descriptions, the committee asks that the title—and especially the course description—clarifies the focus on written and oral communication. There are two reasons for this request: 1) To highlight that the course teaches written and oral communication across disciplines and contexts, rather than serving as an introduction to the discipline or major, and 2) students may wish to transfer this CL1/CL2 course to another institution (including institutions outside of Utah), and the course is more likely to transfer accurately if the title and description indicate that this is a communications literacy course.

For example, History 2730 revised the original title of "Navajo History and Culture" to "Writing about Navajo History and Culture." Here is the revised course description: "This course is designed to teach communications literacy through materials and questions drawn from Navajo history, culture, and contemporary issues. In this course, students will learn how to formulate research questions, seek out reliable sources of data, build arguments, and communicate their thoughts in written and oral form to various audiences."

- **CL2 Prerequisite:** All CL2 courses are required to have the following prerequisite: "Fulfillment of Communications Literacy CL1 requirement through coursework (C- or better in a CL1 course) or examination." Please include this exact prerequisite language on the syllabus and, if the course is approved, any relevant fields in Curriculog.

Note for CI Proposals:

- With the creation of the CI Outcomes and Milestones, the University is now emphasizing that CI courses must intentionally build on CL2 courses. Therefore, rather than expecting CL1 & CL2 courses to "finish" teaching students everything there is to know about written and oral communication, CI courses should continue teaching these concepts. Given that CL1 & CL2 courses cannot be disciplinary-specific, CI courses should be prepared to instruct students in disciplinary-specific forms of written and oral communication.